AMENDED CLAIM SET

The claims have been amended as follows:

1. (currently amended) An inflator, comprising:

a cylindrical inflator housing which is closed at one end thereof and ~~is~~ opened at the other end, and in which a pressurized gas is charged;~~,~~ and

a diffuser portion ~~which is~~ connected to an opening of the inflator housing, ~~accommodates an igniter therein~~ and having ~~has~~ a gas discharge port;~~, wherein~~

a rupturable plate that closes at least one portion of a gas discharge passage extending ~~existing~~ from the inflator housing to the gas discharge port of the diffuser portion; ~~is closed by a flat plate-shaped rupturable plate,~~

an igniter, provided spaced apart from the rupturable plate prior to an activation of the igniter, for rupturing the ~~ruptruable~~ rupturable plate ~~is~~ disposed in the diffuser portion such that an ~~the~~ axial direction of the inflator housing is orthogonal to an ~~the~~ axial direction of the igniter and the axial direction of the igniter does not exactly oppose ~~is not exactly opposite to~~ a surface of the ~~flat plate-shaped~~ rupturable plate;~~,~~ and

~~a~~ means for directing a rupturing energy, generated by activation of the igniter, in a direction that exactly opposes the rupturable plate ~~the exactly opposite direction~~ to rupture the rupturable plate.

2. (currently amended) An inflator according to claim 1, wherein said means is ~~the igniter has~~ a fragile portion provided in the igniter at a portion exactly opposing ~~exactly opposite~~

~~to~~ the rupturable plate, the fragile portion is ruptured upon an ~~at~~ activation of the inflator and a rupturing energy acts on the rupturable plate from the fragile portion.

3. (currently amended) An inflator according to claim 2, wherein the fragile portion provided in the igniter is constituted with a combination of a hole provided in a side face of a cup member covering an ~~the~~ igniting portion of the igniter and a sealing tape closing the hole from the inside of the cup member.

4. (currently amended) An inflator according to claim 2, wherein the fragile portion provided in the igniter comprises a portion surrounded by a groove or a portion with a notch, which is provided in a side face of a cup member covering an ~~the~~ igniting portion of the igniter.

5. (currently amended) An inflator according to claim 1, wherein said means is a guiding passage for guiding the ~~a~~ rupturing energy discharged from the igniter to the rupturable plate ~~is~~ formed in the diffuser portion, and the ~~a~~ rupturing energy is guided to a central portion of the rupturable plate or a portion thereof in the vicinity of the central portion by action of the guiding passage.

6. (currently amended) An inflator according to claim 5, wherein the guiding passage ~~for guiding a rupturing energy discharged from the igniter to the rupturable plate~~ comprises a cap, which surrounds at least an ~~the~~ igniting portion of the igniter and ~~is~~ disposed in a direction orthogonal to the axial direction of the inflator housing, and a hole which is provided

at a position, on a side face of the cap, which ~~isexactly~~ exactly opposes ~~opposite to~~ the rupturable plate.

7. (currently amended) An inflator according to claim 1,~~comprising~~ wherein said means includes,

_____a cap which surrounds at least an ~~the~~ igniting portion of the igniter and ~~is~~ disposed in a direction orthogonal to the axial direction of the inflator housing, and ~~is provided wherein,~~

a groove or a notch formed in a desired shape ~~is~~ provided at a portion, in a peripheral face of the cap, which is exactly opposes ~~opposite to~~ the rupturable plate, wherein~~; and~~

a portion having the desired shape is deformed to bend ~~fall down~~ towards the rupturable plate and come in contact with the rupturable plate by action of the ~~a~~ rupturing energy discharged from the igniter.

8. (currently amended) An inflator according to claim 7, wherein the desired shape portion formed by the groove or the notch has an arrowhead shape, and the arrowhead-shaped portion is deformed to bend ~~fall down~~ towards the rupturable plate and come in contact with the rupturable plate by action of the ~~a~~ rupturing energy discharged from the igniter.

9. (currently amended) An inflator according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~claim 1, wherein the pressurized gas is charged in a single space defined by the cylindrical inflator housing and the diffuser portion.

10. (currently amended) An inflator, comprising:

_____a cylindrical inflator housing which is closed at one end thereof and ~~is~~ opened at the other end and in which a pressurized gas is charged;~~, and~~

_____a diffuser portion which is connected to an opening portion of the inflator housing, ~~accommodates an igniter therein~~ and having ~~has~~ a gas discharge port;~~, wherein~~

~~at least one portion of~~ a gas discharge passage extending ~~existing~~ from the inflator housing to the gas discharge port of the diffuser portion, at least one portion of the gas discharged passage being ~~is~~ closed by a ~~flat plate shaped~~ rupturable plate~~, and the pressurized gas is charged in a single space~~;

an igniter, for rupturing the rupturable plate, ~~is~~ disposed in the diffuser portion, ~~single space charged with the pressurized gas~~ such that the axial direction of the inflator housing and the axial direction of the igniter obliquely cross with each other, the igniter generating ~~; and~~

~~_____a means causing~~ a rupturing energy ~~generated by activation of the igniter~~ to act in an oblique direction directly to the rupturable plate to rupture the rupturable plate.

11. (currently amended) An inflator according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 10~~claim 1 or 10, further comprising: ~~wherein~~

_____a diffuser tube, having a second gas discharge port, ~~is further~~ connected to the gas discharge port of the diffuser portion.

12. (currently amended) An inflator according to claim 11, wherein the diffuser tube is arranged such that the diffuser tube is coaxial to the inflator housing or the central axis of the inflator housing, and the central axis of the diffuser tube are parallel to each other.

13. (currently amended) An inflator according to ~~claim 11 or 12~~claim 11, wherein the diffuser tube has a plurality of ~~plural~~ second gas discharge ports in a peripheral face thereof, and the plurality of ~~plural~~ second gas discharge ports are provided circumferentially at equal intervals.

14. (currently amended) An inflator according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 13~~claim 1 or 10, further comprising: ~~wherein~~

a filter which catches fragments of the rupturable plate being ~~is~~ disposed in the gas discharge passage extending ~~existing~~ from the rupturable plate to the gas discharge port or to the second gas discharge port.

15. (new) An inflator according to claim 12, wherein the diffuser tube has a plurality of second gas discharge ports in a peripheral face thereof and the plural second gas discharge ports are provided circumferentially at equal intervals.

16. (new) An inflator, comprising:

a cylindrical inflator housing provided with an opening portion at one end thereof and a closed portion at the other end thereof, and including a pressurized gas therein;

a diffuser portion connected to the opening portion and having a gas discharge port, the diffuser portion including therein a gas passage extending from the inflator housing to the gas discharge port;

a rupturable plate that closes at least a portion of the gas passage;

an igniter provided within the diffuser portion such that an axis of the igniter is perpendicular to an axis of the cylindrical inflator housing, the igniter generating a combustion product upon activation thereof; and

a deforming member provided between the igniter and the rupturable plate, and being deformed by the combustion product to cause the rupturable plate to rupture by a deformation thereof.

17. (new) The inflator according to claim 16, wherein the deforming member is formed in a single piece and attached to the diffuser portion before activation of the inflator.

18. (new) The inflator according to claim 17, wherein the deforming member is a circumferential portion of a cap that surrounds at least an igniting portion of the igniter and is disposed in a direction perpendicular to the axis of the cylindrical inflator housing.